

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, no claims have been amended. Claims 1-6 are pending and under consideration.

EXAMINER INTERVIEW

The Applicant extends his thanks to the Examiner for the courtesy shown to his representative during the Examiner Interview held on September 4, 2008. In the Interview, the arguments discussed below were emphasized, with particular reference to Figure 4 of the present application. The Examiner noted that further consideration and possibly a new search was needed.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashiba et al. (JP 2001-149685) (hereinafter "Hashiba") in view of Mueller et al. (US 5,507,053) (hereinafter "Mueller").

Claims 1-6

Claim 1 recites: "...wherein the rotary drum comprises a rear part which is closed and coupled to a rotating shaft at a center of the rear part, a front part spaced apart from the rear part, with the inlet opening provided at a central portion of the front part, and the drain hole provided on an edge of the inlet opening of the front part, and a sidewall part which is closed and extends between the rear part and the front part wherein an inner diameter of the sidewall part increases along a direction from the rear part to the front part to allow an internal surface of the sidewall part to be inclined, and the drain hole comprises a plurality of rows of drain holes provided around an edge of the front part of the rotary drum."

The present invention according to claim 1 recites a rotary drum which includes a closed rear part, a front part having drain holes provided on an edge thereof, and a sidewall part which is closed and extends between the rear part and the front part and has an increased inner diameter, thereby effectively reducing washing water.

The Office Action relies on the primary reference Hashiba to show these features of claim 1. In contrast to claim 1, Hashiba discloses a rotating drum 42 having holes along its sidewall. On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner notes that holes 45 are formed completely around the peripheral walls of the drum. The Examiner then notes that if one were to

split the drum 42 into a front half and a back half, this would read on the recited feature of claim 1 of "drain holes provided around an edge of the front part of the rotary drum."

Claim 1 recites a front part, a rear part and sidewalls connecting the front part to the rear part. Claim 1 recites that the drain holes are provided in the front part of the rotary drum. By contrast, Hashiba clearly shows that holes 45 are formed in the sidewall of the drum 42. For exemplary purposes, the Examiner is respectfully invited to compare Figure 1 of Hashiba to Figure 4 of the present application. Figure 4 of the present application clearly shows drain holes 25 provided around an edge of the front part 22 of the rotary drum 20.

Further, this deficiency in Hashiba is not cured by the secondary reference Mueller, which discloses a vertical type washing machine which includes an upstanding rotating basket 34.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Hashiba and Mueller, whether taken alone or in combination with each other, fail to teach or suggest a **closed sidewall part** of a rotary drum in a drum type washing machine by which a drain operation can **only** be achieved at only a front part of the rotary drum.

As previously argued, this technical feature of claim 1 where the drain holes are only at the front part of the rotary drum provides that the water is guided to the drain holes of the rotary drum during a rotation of the rotary drum, for example during a high speed spin-drying operation of the washing machine. Accordingly, the water is squeezed out of the laundry in the rotary drum to move outward in a radial direction of the rotary drum due to a centrifugal force, and is guided to the drain holes provided on the front part of the rotary drum along the inclined internal surface of the cylindrical sidewall part, prior to being discharged to the outside of the rotary drum. This allows a smooth discharging of the water from the rotary drum and further provides that the drum washing machine only needs to feed a small amount of water from a water tub into the rotary drum after heating the small amount of water by use of a heater, thus reducing an amount of electricity required to heat the water, and reducing the washing time.

In short, this technical feature of claim 1 provides for a washing machine which uses less water, and reduces an amount of electricity required to heat the water, and reduces washing time, without reducing the washing effect of the drum washing machine.

Claims 2-6 depend on claim 1 and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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